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MODI NAMES 4 ASTRONAUTS FOR 1ST HUMAN SPACE FLIGHT MISSION

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the names of astronauts who are undergoing training for India's first human flight mission, Gaganyaan

HONOURS THEM WITH 'ASTRONAUT WINGS'

The astronauts are Group Captains Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair, Angad Pratap, Ajit Krishnan, and Wing Commander Shubhanshu Shukla. Gaganyaan aims to send three astronauts to an orbit of 400 km for a three-day mission and bring them back safely home. Honouring them with the prestigious 'astronaut wings', Modi said they represent the aspirations of all | P7

MOST COMPONENTS USED ARE MADE IN INDIA

- Most components of Gaganyaan are Made in India, the PM pointed out, underscoring the nation's self-reliance in space exploration
- He said after four decades an Indian was going into space and "this time around, the countdown, the timing and even the rocket would be ours." He described the astronauts as the country's four Shaktis

2K-3K

HOURS OF CUMULATIVE FLYING EXPERIENCE THE ASTRONAUTS HAVE

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Modi Sarkar ki Guarantee

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PM-JANMAN with total outlay of ₹24 thousand crore to ensure socio-economic welfare of tribal communities

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Hamara Sankalp Viksit Bharat

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Dukhu govt on brink as rebels gift BJP RS seat

Six Congress MLAs vote for BJP in HP; cross-voting by 7 SP MLAs gives the saffron party eighth seat in Uttar Pradesh

HARPREET BAJWA AND NAMITA BAJPAI @ Chandigarh/ Lucknow

'SUKHU' was not a word the Congress would have wanted to associate itself with on Tuesday amid cross-voting in three states the Rajya Sabha elections; the more appropriate term was 'Dukhu'. If the Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu government failed to keep its flock together for the lone Rajya Sabha seat from Himachal Pradesh, giving the BJP an stunning victory, the Samajwadi Party suffered a blow in Uttar Pradesh as the saffron party snatched a seat from under its nose, winning eight in all. The situation reversed in Karnataka as one BJP MLA cross-voted and another abstained from voting.

Himachal Pradesh saw the BJP's Harsh Mahajan registering an upset victory over Congress candidate Abhishek Manu Singhvi. The Sukhu government in Himachal is now on the edge as the state budget has to be passed on February 29 (Thursday). If the government fails to do so, it will lose legitimacy.

Though the BJP has only 25 seats in the 68-member Himachal assembly, Mahajan polled 34 votes to tie with Singhvi's score. The victor was then decided by a draw of lots. As many as six Congress lawmakers and three Independents voted in favour of Mahajan.

In UP, the contest was for the eighth seat as the BJP and the SP had easily pocketed seven and two, respectively. Seven of the SP lawmakers cross-voted for the BJP's eighth candidate Sanjay Seth, who is an SP import. The seven SP rebels are Abhay Singh, Rakesh Pratap Singh, Rakesh Pandey, Manoj Pandey (SP chief whip), Ashutosh Maurya, Vinod Chaturvedi and Puja Pal. Besides, one SP MLA, Maharaji Devi, abstained.

Draw of lots part rules

Harsh Mahajan (BJP) defeated Abhishek Manu Singhvi (Congress) by a draw of lots, which was a tie-breaker. In the RS, the candidate whose slip is drawn loses the poll, while in the LS, the one whose slip is drawn, wins

Rebels will be expelled

"We knew they would rebel when they skipped the dinner. There was a buzz about different packages. The rebels will be expelled," Akhilesh said

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah casts his vote during the Rajya Sabha polls in Bengaluru on Tuesday | EXPRESS

BJP TO TAKE LEGAL ACTION AGAINST MLA

Bengaluru: The Opposition BJP has decided to take legal action against MLA ST Somashekar for violating the party whip by cross voting in the Rajya Sabha polls. "Whatever he has done, it is political suicide," Leader of Opposition R Ashoka said | P6

Maken wins as Cong claims 3 RS seats, BJP 1 in K'taka

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI @ Bengaluru

RULING Congress bagged three seats and BJP secured one in the biennial elections held for four seats of the Rajya Sabha from Karnataka on Tuesday.

Former Union minister and AICC treasurer Ajay Maken, Syed Naseer Hussain and GC Chandrashekar of Congress, Narayansa K Bhandage of BJP were declared elected for a tenure of six years from April 3, 2024. The polling and counting of votes was held at Vidhana soudha.

The BJP-JDS alliance faced a setback as their candidate, fifth in the fray – former RS member D Kupendra Reddy of JDS, polled 36 votes against the 45 required and lost. Of the 224 elected MLAs, 222 exercised their franchise and all the votes were valid. While Yellapur BJP MLA Shivaram Hebbar abstained, Surapura Congress MLA Raja Venkatappa Naik died on Sunday.

The results were on the expected lines, except for a drama involving two rebel BJP MLAs who defied the party whip to favour Congress, which however made no difference. Yeshwanthpur MLA ST Somashekar cross voted for Maken of Congress, while Hebbar did not turn up. Both are likely to join Congress. P6

Row erupts over 'pro-Pak' slogans at Soudha

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

CONGRESS' celebrations after its impressive win in the Rajya Sabha polls were marred by a controversy over followers of newly elected RS member Syed Naseer Hussain allegedly raising slogans that were heard as "Pakistan Zindabad" in the corridors of Vidhana Soudha on Tuesday evening. But it remains unclear whether the slogans, shouted amid a lot of din, were "Naseer-saab Zindabad" or "Pakistan Zindabad". BJP filed a complaint with the Vidhana Soudha police against Hussain and his supporters, and an FIR was registered against "unknown persons".

Soon after his victory, Hussain was seen with his followers who were raising slogans in Vidhana Soudha corridors. P6

SC issues contempt notice to Patanjali, Balkrishna

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Tuesday issued a contempt notice to Patanjali Ayurved and its managing director Acharya Balkrishna for publishing advertisements on cures of their medicines, despite their undertaking to follow the court's earlier order. The Supreme Court had in its earlier order restrained the company from issuing advertisements relating to blood pressure, diabetes and asthma.

"The entire country is taken for a ride (by Patanjali)," the Supreme Court observed. The court passed the order after hearing a petition filed by the Indian Medical Association regarding misinformation against allopathy.

The apex court restrained Patanjali from advertising its medicinal products till further hearing, which is set for three weeks from now.

SAME PROPERTY

City couple swindles over 15 banks

YATHIRAJU @ Bengaluru

A couple from the city has defrauded nationalised banks, regional cooperative banks and private financial institutions by mortgaging the same property to all of them to obtain crores of rupees as loan. They have also fabricated documents of a property that does not even exist in the city.

When bank authorities went to attach the property at Begur in Bengaluru South taluk, they found that the plot had already been pledged to many other financial institutions. Only when the authorities verified the documents at the Begur sub-registrar's office, BBMP and BDA, did they find out that the documents of lands/sites shown on different numbers at Begur were fabricated.

Over 15 banks and financial institutions were in queue to recover the loan and interest from the couple, KS Nagesh and Suma BS, who had obtained loans for procuring machinery for their companies, Shrinidhi Manufacturers and Shrinidhi Masala.

To quote just a few instances, they owed Rs 1.30 crore to Tumakuru Merchants Credit Cooperative as of 2018, Rs 2.09 crore to Tumakuru Grain Merchants Cooperative Bank as of December 2022, Rs 1.88 crore to Koteshwar Cooperative Bank as of 2022 and Rs 1 crore to Tumakuru Veerashaiva Cooperative Bank. They had taken Rs 95 lakh from Syndicate Bank in 2018. CONTINUED ON: P7

Ex-SC judge Khanwilkar new Lokpal chairperson

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

FORMER Supreme Court judge Ajay Manikrao Khanwilkar was on Tuesday appointed the chairperson of Lokpal, almost two years after the post fell vacant. The Lokpal has been functioning without a regular chief after Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose completed his term on May 27, 2022.

President Droupadi Murmu also named six others as members of the anti-corruption ombudsman. Former Chief Justice of Himachal Pradesh High Court Lingappa Narayana Swamy, former chief justice of Karnataka HC and present chairperson of the Law Commission of India Ritu Raj Awasthi, and former Allahabad HC chief justice Sanjay Yadav are the new judicial members of Lokpal. Former CEC Sushil Chandra, former Gujarat chief secretary Pankaj Kumar, and former Secretary, Department of Land Resources Ajay Tirkey are the non-judicial members.

Justice A M Khanwilkar

Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi

Justice Khanwilkar was part of important verdicts including decriminalization of homosexuality, Sabarimala issue, and Narendra Modi's exoneration in the 2002 case. The Lokpal is a powerful institution that has jurisdiction over government to probe corruption allegations against its functionaries including the prime minister.

EXPRESS READ

I.N.D.I.A bloc has accepted defeat, alliance just to loot people: PM

Tiruppur: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said the I.N.D.I.A bloc has accepted that they will be defeated in polls, but they continue with their alliance to loot people. "The voters have made up their mind to prevent it," he said in Tiruppur on Tuesday. P7

Model code for LS polls in 10-12 days, hints Joshi

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ KGF

UNION Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi on Tuesday hinted that the model code of conduct for the Lok Sabha polls could come into force by the second week of March.

At an event to distribute possession certificates to former employees of Bharat Gold Mines Ltd at Kolar Gold Fields, he told local legislator Roopa Kala Sashidhar to come to New Delhi within the next 10-12 days to discuss issues related to BGML ex-employees, which was construed by political experts as an indication of the coming model code of conduct.

Akshata's outings spark security concerns

RISHITA KHANNA @ Bengaluru

AKSHATA Murty, wife of UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, was recently spotted browsing books at a book fair with her children and parents, Infosys founder NR Narayana Murthy and writer-philanthropist Sudha Murty, near Raghavendra Mutt in JP Nagar, Bengaluru, in a viral video that garnered praise for her simplicity.

But concerns were also raised over her security, given her status as Britain's First Lady. The city police said security arrangements can be made only based on the directives of the government.

A video grab of Akshata Murty at a book fair in Bengaluru recently

The video showing the family browsing books was posted on Monday, but it is not known when the outing happened. It received over 7,000 views, but also prompted concerns about security as Akshata is now a VVIP.

An X user questioned, "Who will provide security – India or the UK. Since it is her personal visit, India cannot offer security, and the UK typically does not prioritise security for such visits." Another user posted, "The security breach is highly irresponsible, and if anything were to happen to her here, the Indian Embassy would be held accountable."

Earlier this month, Akshata was spotted enjoying ice cream with her father Narayana Murthy at an ice cream parlour in Jayanagar. P4

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